



**Congressman Paul E. Gillmor**

# *THE GILLMOR BULLETIN*

**April 2004**

**CONTACT CONGRESSMAN  
PAUL E. GILLMOR**

**In Washington:**

1203 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
202-225-6405

**In Ohio:**

96 South Washington  
Street, Suite 400  
Tiffin, OH 44883  
419-448-9016

613 West Third Street  
Defiance, OH 43512  
419-782-1996

130 Shady Lane Drive  
Norwalk, OH 44857  
419-668-0206

**Toll Free in Ohio:**

Phone: 1-800-541-6446  
Fax: 1-800-278-8203

**Online:**

[www.house.gov/gillmor](http://www.house.gov/gillmor)

**Via Email:**

[paul.gillmor@mail.house.gov](mailto:paul.gillmor@mail.house.gov)

## **Gillmor Washington Update**

As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent Ohio's Fifth Congressional District here in Washington, DC.

In order to keep the citizens of the Fifth District better informed and up to date on my activities in Washington, DC and back home in Ohio, I have published this second edition of my monthly newsletter. It is my goal to provide you with the information you need to stay informed on the issues important to Ohio. In this edition of my Monthly Update I have focused on the important events that have taken place in the month of March and inform you of upcoming April events in the Fifth District. I hope that you will find this information beneficial. Please contact me should you have any questions or comments.

## **Historic Preservation: The Future of American Presidential Legacies**



The Home of Rutherford B. Hayes on the grounds of Spiegel Grove in Fremont

On March 4, 2004 I introduced the Presidential Sites Improvement Act (H.R. 3903), legislation establishing a program to award grants to improve and maintain sites honoring U.S. Presidents. In so doing, I joined with my Senate colleague Mike DeWine who authored a similar piece of legislation currently pending consideration in the U.S. Senate.

The Fifth District is home to America's First Presidential

Library at the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center on the Spiegel Grove estate in Fremont and as your representative I'm working to ensure that it is preserved and maintained for future generations. Other presidential sites are scattered across the country and are owned by family foundations, colleges and universities, libraries, historical societies, and other non-profit organizations. Many of these entities are facing decreased funding levels and are unable to meet the demands of maintaining such historic treasures.

Our presidential sites are an important part of America's culture. Our nation has been governed by only 42 former presidents and it is important that we maintain their legacies as an important part of the history of the United States.

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## Protecting America's Children: The Need for an Accessible National Registry of Sex Offenders



Currently, in the State of Ohio you can go online to <http://www.esorn.ag.state.oh.us/> and search for any sex offenders residing in your area. However, if your family was planning to move across state lines and interested in safety information on other areas, there is not a national database for you to access. To address this problem, on March 10, 2004, I introduced the National Sex Offender Registry Act in the House of Representatives. My

legislation would require the U.S. Attorney General to make use of existing law enforcement records submitted by each state under the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act to compile a national sex offender registry and make it available to anyone with internet access.

The Jacob Wetterling Act requires that any person who is convicted of a crime against a minor, or who is convicted of a sexually violent offense against anyone, register a current address with a designated state law enforcement agency for at least 10 years. It also requires all persons judged to be sexually violent predators to register for their entire lifetime.

Some states have existing databases, like that available in Ohio, but many do not. My bill would make sure no parent intending to move across state lines, is left without a way of knowing whether or not their new neighbor has a criminal sexual history.

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## The Mixing of Banking and Commerce: A Threat to our Financial System



On March 18, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to pass the Financial Services Regulatory Relief Act of 2003 (H.R. 1375), legislation creating a streamlined and effective regulatory compliance process for financial institutions. This bill, as passed by the House Financial Services Committee,

would have created a dangerous loophole allowing large retailers and other

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commercial entities to offer banking services nationwide through the acquisition of Industrial Loan Corporations or "ILC" charters.

I shared the fears of many small financial institutions in the Fifth District of Ohio, regarding the unfair competition such commercial firms would present, using retail and other commercial profits to back their financial activities in clear defiance of longstanding banking law preventing such a mixing of banking and commerce. With the assistance of the House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Barney Frank and support of our House Financial Services Committee Chairman Mike Oxley, I was able to negotiate a bipartisan solution to this problem, language instituting an 85% financial test for the parent of any ILC that wishes to branch nationwide and received FDIC insurance before October 1, 2003.

H.R. 1375 passed the House with my compromise language allowing financial institutions to receive the regulatory relief they need without opening our financial system to the unacceptable risk posed by the mixing of banking and commerce.

## Environmental Concerns: High Lead Levels in Drinking Water



As Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials, I launched a wide-ranging investigation, last month, into the occurrence of elevated levels of lead in the drinking water for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

As my subcommittee holds jurisdiction over the Safe Drinking Water Act, it is our responsibility to uncover any violations of the law.

The primary sources of lead in drinking water are lead pipe, lead-based solder used to connect pipe in plumbing systems, and brass plumbing fixtures that contain lead. Even though lead levels in children have decreased 86 percent over the last 25 years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that approximately 20 percent of a person's exposure to lead can come from drinking water.

In early March, I wrote letters to both the EPA and the Washington, D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) on this issue and asked the General Accounting Office (GAO) to begin an independent inquiry into the operation of WASA and the Washington Aqueduct, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

A thorough review of the dangerously high levels of lead in D.C.'s drinking water, in many cases 20 times the safe limit set by the EPA, is necessary to ensure that Water Authorities have adequate testing and public notification procedures in place. We need to be assured that our public health is being protected and this is not a national phenomenon.



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## Public Health: Ground Water Safety



Congressman Gillmor Receives the Title of  
"Ground Water Protector"

Last month, I was honored to receive the National Ground Water Protector Award from the National Ground Water Association (NGWA). In my role as Chairman of the Environment and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I have worked hard to promote ground water conservation and protection. Last year, I introduced legislation to protect ground water from contamination by leaking underground gasoline storage tanks and I hope to see it passed this year as part of H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2003, an essential overall energy reform measure.

Nearly half the U.S. population depends on ground water for its drinking water supply and the number one source of ground water contamination is underground gasoline storage tanks. We need federal safeguards to protect our ground water for current and future generations.

## High Gas Prices: The Need for Comprehensive Energy Legislation



As Americans continue to face startling gasoline prices at the pump, last week, I joined with House Majority Leader Tom DeLay and House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Joe Barton, in calling on the Senate to pass the comprehensive energy legislation (H.R. 6) the House has sent them three times in the last three years. Our National Energy Policy is in desperate need of the important reforms H.R. 6 contains, correcting America's supply and demand

imbalance and bringing lower prices for consumers. I have now served twice on the conference committee appointed to resolve this matter and each time the American people have been failed by the inaction of a few Senators who are more interested in politics than lowering our prices at the pump.

The House-passed energy bill balances the need for more domestic energy production with commonsense goals for conservation. H.R. 6 also provides for an unprecedented increase in renewable sources of energy, such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, and hydroelectric power.

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Since the House first passed a comprehensive energy package in 2001, the average price of gasoline has skyrocketed from \$1.34 per gallon to more than \$1.70 today; the cost of home heating oil has increased by 33%; the cost of clean-burning natural gas has increased by an astounding 92%; a massive electricity blackout crippled the Northeast; and the United States has sent over \$300 billion to OPEC and other foreign nations to meet our energy needs at home.

High gas prices hurt not only Fifth District consumers at the pump but also farmers in Northwest Ohio who depend on fuel to perform their jobs. There is no doubt that energy is the lifeblood of our economy, in fact, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has testified on Capitol Hill many times in recent months citing energy costs as the greatest threat to an otherwise burgeoning economy in the U.S. The Senate must act on the House-passed energy principles that will increase domestic supply, create jobs, lower prices for consumers, and eliminate this great hazard to our economic security.

## The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Historic Enlargement



On March 29, 2004 I was honored, as Chairman of the Economic and Security Committee of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO-PA), to join with President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in commemorating the accession of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia into NATO.

The NATO-PA is the inter-parliamentary organization of legislators from the member countries of the NATO Alliance. The Assembly provides a critical forum for international parliamentary dialogue on an array of security, political and economic matters. Its principal objective is to foster mutual understanding among alliance parliamentarians who represent a broad spectrum of political parties.

The Central and East European democracies welcomed into NATO this month have already acted as U.S. Allies through their strong solidarity and support in the ongoing war on terrorism, and in helping to strengthen peace and democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq. As NATO faces the new challenges of the 21st century, these seven new member nations will help NATO advance the cause of freedom, and strengthen the Atlantic Alliance in its pursuit of political, economic, and military reform around the world.

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## Focus on Ohio: April Casework Onsites



One of my goals as Congressman is to make sure that casework services are readily available to all my constituents. Unfortunately, the size of our sixteen county district makes travel to my Defiance, Tiffin, or Norwalk offices prohibitive for many. In order to ensure that my staff is accessible to all my constituents, I have scheduled casework onsite in Sandusky and Wood Counties as follows:

**Thursday, April 29, 2004**  
**9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.**  
**Gibsonburg Village Hall**  
**Council Chambers**  
**120 North Main Street**  
**Gibsonburg, OH**

**Thursday, April 29, 2004**  
**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Walbridge Municipal Building**  
**Council Chambers**  
**111 North Main Street**  
**Walbridge, OH**

If you are in the area, I encourage you to stop by and my staff will be happy to assist you with any problems you are having with the federal government.

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## Contact Me

If you have any suggestions on topics you would like to see addressed in my monthly updates, require any additional information, or would like to inform me of your views on matters concerning the federal government, please contact me anytime in Washington, DC or in any of my Ohio offices.

If you wish to forward your questions or concerns via U.S. mail please address your correspondence to one of my Ohio offices as mail sent to the Longworth House Office Building in Washington is subject to a lengthy screening process and may not reach my office in a timely manner.